

BOX

1

FOLDER

7

Parks, Dept.
of-Commissioner Stover

1913

CHARLES B. STOVER,
COMMISSIONER.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN & RICHMOND
ARSENAL, CENTRAL PARK

LFL/Ab.

November 10, 1913.

Hon. Ardolph L. Kline,
MAYOR,
The City of New York.

Sir:

Pursuant to our conversation of to-day, I respectfully beg leave to place before you this communication, stating as nearly as I possibly can the position in which I am placed as a subordinate in this Department.

On October 16th, Commissioner Stover, without giving any notice whatever, started on his vacation without authorizing me to act as his deputy, or to sign any of the pay rolls, communications or permits that necessarily have to be signed by the Commissioner in the ordinary routine of official business. On October 20th, I received a telegram from Commissioner Stover, stating that he intended to extend his vacation until the end of the week, since which time I have received no word from him directly, or indirectly.

However, I have assumed the responsibility of clearing up all business requiring his signature as Commissioner of Parks, for the Boroughs of Manhattan and Richmond. I cannot however, nor will I, assume the responsibility of executing any contracts or signing any checks requiring the signature of the Commissioner of Parks, as President of the Park Board. I have on my desk at the present time, several contracts that have been executed in all details, with the exception of the required signature of the President of the Park Board, and have also a number of checks given as deposits on street openings which should have been returned sometime ago to the depositors.

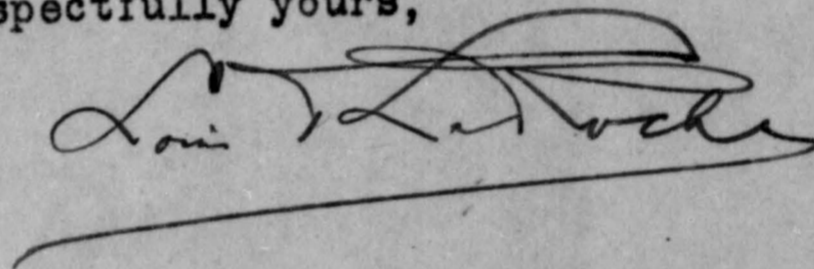
I do not think that the Commissioner, by his absence, would desire

Hon. Ardolph L. Kline, M A Y O R, -----11/10/13---#2.

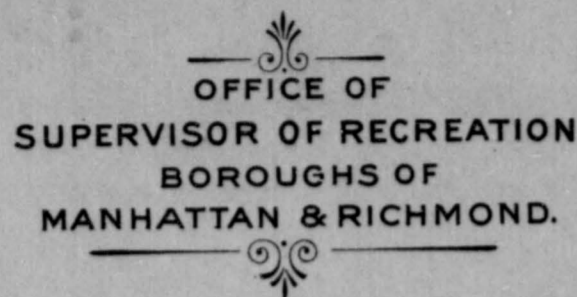
to work a hardship on anyone, but I am of the opinion that these contracts should be executed, so that the contractors can be ordered on with the work before the very cold weather sets in, and I respectfully ask that pending the Commissioner's return, you take the proper means of authorizing me to act in his capacity. This I presume can only be affected by my appointment, which by my resignation under blank date (to be filled in by you) will terminate upon his return to the office.

I respectfully ask that immediate action be taken, so that the business of this office may be cleared up.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Louis L. Locke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK.



Department of Parks,
The Arsenal, Central Park.

Nov. 21st 1913.

191

Hon. Ardolph L. Kline, Mayor,
Office of the Mayor,
City Hall, N. Y. City.

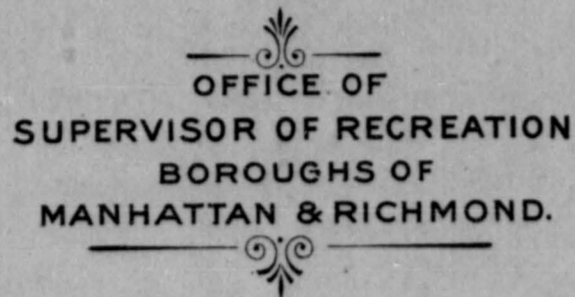
My dear Mayor:-

Pursuant to a privilege accorded me as Supervisor of Recreation, by Hon. Charles B. Stover, Commissioner of Parks, of communicating with the Late Hon. William J. Gaynor, Chief Executive of the City of New York, in matters pertaining to Playgrounds, Recreation, etc., I take the liberty of writing you this letter. I do so because of the fact of numerous communications and inquiries that have come to me from his many friends and the public, as to the whereabouts of Mr. Stover.

I desire to say, in part, in order to set things aright, that it is my firm belief that Mr. Stover had become greatly grieved over the death of our Late Friend, Hon. William J. Gaynor. Mr. Stover devoted his life for a quarter of a century, as a Citizen, to the uplift and betterment of our City, and so did Mayor Gaynor. In the closing days of the Mayor's term we saw four Political Parties go into Convention without even mentioning his name, and it remained for the Independent Citizens of all Parties of this City to place him in re-nomination, as a reward for his labors. The Mayor was a martyr to his duty, though he suffered greatly, and was the victim of the Storms of State. He went away from it all to rest, and died peacefully at Sea. Then the whole World knelt at his bier, in reverence, and little children came with flowers; thousands stood in the rain, waiting for a glimpse of his face and a million people breathlessly watched, in silence, his funeral cortege from City Hall. Among that throng was Park Commissioner Stover, a simple mourner, and it was noticeable by his friends that he shook with grief at the grave of his friend. "For He was a Caesar, whence comes such another?"

Mr. Stover never seemed, to my mind, to rally from the shock of the Mayor's death. In a conversation with him shortly after the death of the Mayor, we had planned to dedicate the new William J. Gaynor Playground now nearing completion at 151st Street & Amsterdam Avenue, before the end of your term, in honor of the Late Mayor, and it was Mr. Stover's wish that Your Honor deliver the address of the Day. It is indeed befitting that a playground should be named after our Late Mayor, because of the rapid progress and development of playgrounds made during his administration, and further because of the Mayor's extreme love for little children. We planned at the Opening Exercises of the Playground to reproduce the Pageant of the "History of the City of New York for Three Hundred Years" from the First Settlement (1613) down to 1913, given at Central Park on Aug. 23rd, at which we hoped to have the pleasure of the Mayor's company, but he was ill and could not attend. The children of the Park Playgrounds were driven to City Hall on

THE CITY OF NEW YORK.



Department of Parks,

The Arsenal, Central Park.

-2-

191

Aug. 21st "Four-in-hand", and personally invited the Mayor to attend the Pageant. They were dressed in the costumes to represent all the Characters of the Late Rulers of the Island from the Indian Chieftain down to His Honor, himself. The Mayor talked with them about City History and the Characters they represented, and he was amazed at their aptness, and enjoyed their visit immensely. He came out to the City Hall steps to see them off. I am enclosing you a photograph of the group and a program of the affair. We now hope to have the honor of your presence and feel that you will deliver the address at the dedication of the William J. Gaynor Playground upon its completion in December.

Mr. Stover's work in Parks and Playgrounds stands out. The reclamation of the drive-ways, walks, buildings, re-planting, and the development of thirty new supervised Play Centres and several Childrens' School Farms, without the purchase of an extra foot of ground, speaks for itself. He made appeals to private property owners, to the Bridge and Water Departments, to develop un-used land, and was successful. He established the Bureau of Recreation in order that playgrounds and recreation centres would have an Administrative Head to devote his time to the problems of play and recreation; The Late Mayor and entire press of this City have applauded the work accomplished.

Mr. Stover was an untiring and conscientious worker. He never took strong drink and rarely a vacation. He was a man of extremely good health, possessed of kindly impulses, strong convictions, and unstinting in his praise of the Department Heads who aided him in his work. In a word, he was the product of righteous living and a Gentleman of the "First Waters". I sincerely trust that the judgment of his critics be suspended until his whereabouts be discovered. There was no need for Mr. Stover to run away because he had nothing to fear, and he was afraid of no man; save for the fact that a mishap has befallen him, which is borne out by the facts that he did not register to vote, and failed to appear at the Budget Hearings with his Department Heads, as was his custom. "Tis the office of a Friend to bear with a Friend's Infirmities". It would therefore, not be amiss if search for him was made.

The Bureau is also indebted to the un-erring foresight of Hon. John Purroy Mitchel, Mayor Elect, while he was a Member of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, and Chairman of the Budget Committee, in relation to Parks, Playgrounds, Recreation, etc., for the advanced Budget Appropriations, in accordance with the progress made, and this year Your Honor has concurred in the advancement for the appropriation of 1914.

Respectfully yours,

Supervisor, Bureau of Recreation.

